

points to that effort as one of his “biggest disappointments,” it was that debate that kept the issue of universal coverage alive for the past 16 years. We are now poised with JOHN DINGELL once again serving as the lead House negotiator to work with President Obama to make health insurance for all Americans a reality in this Congress.

Mr. DINGELL and I share a passion for oversight. When I first came to Congress, and particularly once I became a member of the Commerce Committee, Mr. DINGELL provided valuable mentorship that has enabled me to continue his tradition of aggressive oversight through the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee. Mr. DINGELL not only understands the role of Congress to oversee the executive branch, he, perhaps more than anyone else before him, used this authority to uncover abuses of power including corruption, waste and fraud that jeopardized not only taxpayer dollars but also the health and safety of the American people.

JOHN DINGELL has proven that investigations can accomplish as much as legislation. As chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Mr. DINGELL used broad jurisdiction over the committee to effect changes on issues such as defense contracting, insider trading, Superfund cleanup, medical device safety, unfair foreign trade practices, food and drug safety, blood banks and pipeline safety.

In an age when State legislatures are quick to enact term limits, JOHN DINGELL is a shining example of how valuable tenure can be. The perspective and knowledge he brings to the table after 53 years of service is a critical part of the legislative process that allows us to avoid repeating past mistakes and continue to push for longstanding goals such as universal health care.

Whether it is battling in committee or on the floor, teaming up in an investigation or relaxing with JOHN and Debbie Dingell on Mackinac Island, I have valued Mr. DINGELL as a colleague, mentor and friend.

Our country is a better place, and Congress is a stronger institution because of the contributions of JOHN DINGELL.

#### TAKING CARE OF OUR NATION'S VETERANS: A MOTHER'S LETTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, while our Nation faces many serious issues, from the economy to health care, there is one important issue we must not forget. That is the issue of American servicemembers who are returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with mental health challenges.

Earlier this month, I received a letter from the mother of a marine who is stationed in my district at Camp

Lejeune. This mother is very concerned about how the Marine Corps is treating her son. And I would like to read from her letter.

“Congressman Jones, my son joined the United States Marine Corps while still in high school. I remember him as a little boy looking in awe at his grandfather in his Marine Corps uniform and telling me that was what he was going to be when he grew up.

“Growing up, he was the son every parent could be proud of. He never got into any trouble in school, was always there to help with his younger siblings, held a job after school and was extremely active in the Boy Scouts. He earned his rank of Eagle Scout at the age of 16 and held many positions within the Boy Scouts.

“Because of his Eagle Scout status, he entered the Marine Corps as a PFC and quickly rose to the rank of sergeant within his first 3 years in the Marines. He was an exemplary marine and an exemplary young man.

“If you review his military record, you can plainly see that he had no problems with behavior or performance prior to his deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

“He has had a very difficult time readjusting to life after conflict. He came home to a ‘Dear John’ letter, had several friends injured and killed and has seen more destruction than most of us will see in a lifetime. And having no one to turn to for help because of the stigma and the fear of losing his career, he started drinking to self-medicate so that he would be able to sleep.

“Congressman, do you know what it is like to listen to your once-strong son cry like a baby at 3:30 in the morning three to four times a week because he can’t handle what he has been through? Wanting to kill himself because he doesn’t feel he is worthy to live because his brothers were shot down?

“Do you know what it is like to be 1,500 miles away and not have the ability to help him through this? All the while wondering and asking why the Corps he served so proudly and willingly has written him off as worthless and weak and offer no help to prevent him from faltering further?

“I am so sadly disappointed in the way the Corps has treated my son. My son left for the Marine Corps 100 percent intact. He will be leaving the Marine Corps with two feet that are fractured, back and knee problems, decreased hearing and decreased vision and PTSD that will carry a lifetime burden for him.

“And yet, according to the Corps, he has disgraced them by his behavior and he is no longer worthy. The way I see it, they used him, abused him and now will discard him and find some fresh young man who ‘isn’t tainted’ and they will mold him and ask him to sacrifice himself for their cause. And when he is no longer of use to them, they will discard him, as well.

“I hope with all my heart that the Marine Corps will find the moral cour-

age to do the right thing when it comes to not only my son, but all those other young men and women who need their help and guidance.”

Mr. Speaker, this letter may tell the story of just one marine, but this is not an uncommon tale. An April 2008 study by the RAND Corporation found that nearly 20 percent of the Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who were surveyed have symptoms of PTSD or other major depression. The study also found that many servicemembers say they do not seek treatment for psychological illness because they feel it will harm their careers.

While Congress has implemented some positive reforms in funding increases to improve veterans’ health care in recent years, more must be done to ensure that our veterans are receiving adequate care and compensation.

Promises made should be promises kept. And our Nation must never forget the servicemembers and veterans who have gone to war for this country.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to put into the RECORD that I have been talking with the Marine Corps. They have promised me they will try to help this young marine. And I must close, Mr. Speaker, for all those serving in Afghanistan and Iraq and all those who were killed and all of those wounded both physically and mentally, that God continue to bless our servicemen and God continue to bless America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. RAHALL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### THE TRUE COST OF THE STIMULUS PACKAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot about the economy, as we should, but I would like to focus on the cost of all of this money that the government says it needs to spend. The front page of today’s USA Today is headlined, “Trillions Aimed At Financial Recovery,” and here we see a photograph of the Treasury Secretary, Mr. Geithner, scratching his head as he is talking to Members of Congress when he testified yesterday.

Now we hear about the billions spent for this program and the trillions spent for this program all in the name of helping the economy. I would like to focus on the cost of all of this. If you add up all of the bailout packages from last year, the so-called stimulus packages, and the bills yet to be passed but promised to be passed this year, plus the debt that it will cost Americans yet to be born, it is \$9,700,000,000,000.